

EDUCATION

Saks' The New Wave program for budding talent, brands enter year three

May 15, 2023



The brands in this year's The New Wave at Saks program include Armando Cabral, wet, Bernard James, Elisamama, Interior, June 79, Renowned and Sorellina. Image courtesy of Saks

By MICKEY ALAM KHAN

Luxury retailer Saks has debuted the third year of The New Wave at Saks, its designer accelerator program with an eye on developing new talent.

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Launched in 2021, The New Wave at Saks aims to support the next generation of design and retail talent and develop high-potential independent brands by accelerating their growth at Saks as well as within the fashion industry overall.

"Saks is committed to championing emerging designers by providing them with a platform to share their unique point of view as well as resources to help them succeed," said Anna Irving, senior vice president and general merchandising manager for women's designer ready-to-wear at Saks.

Saks is one of the leading luxury retailers in the United States, with complementary bricks-and-mortar and ecommerce operations.

Training engine

After two years of the program, this year's New Wave cohort includes a lineup of brands spanning categories from women's and men's fashion to footwear, jewelry and kids.

As part of Saks' mission to amplify diverse voices and increase representation in fashion, at least half of program participants each year are BIPOC brands, the New York-based retailer said.

The brands in this year's program include Armando Cabral, wet, Bernard James, Elisamama, Interior, June 79, Renowned and Sorellina.

This year's brands have been selected by Saks leadership to participate in a six-month-long program, including a retail bootcamp, mentorship and consulting services, entrepreneurial workshops and industry roundtables to gain the skills and insights needed to scale their businesses at Saks and beyond.

Each brand will be eligible to receive a \$10,000 grant to support their business operations and growth. They will also

derive dedicated marketing support from Saks, including content exposure on the Saks.com website.

Make it pay

Mastercard is the presenting sponsor of The New Wave at Saks for the third year in a row.

The payments processor will host a dedicated roundtable session to provide participating brands an overview and access to its Digital Doors program, including exclusive resources and tools aimed to help small businesses further grow and digitally enhance their online presence.

"Through the continuation of The New Wave program, Saks is advancing our goal of increasing representation in our assortment as well as providing our customers with exciting fashion," Ms. Irving said.

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